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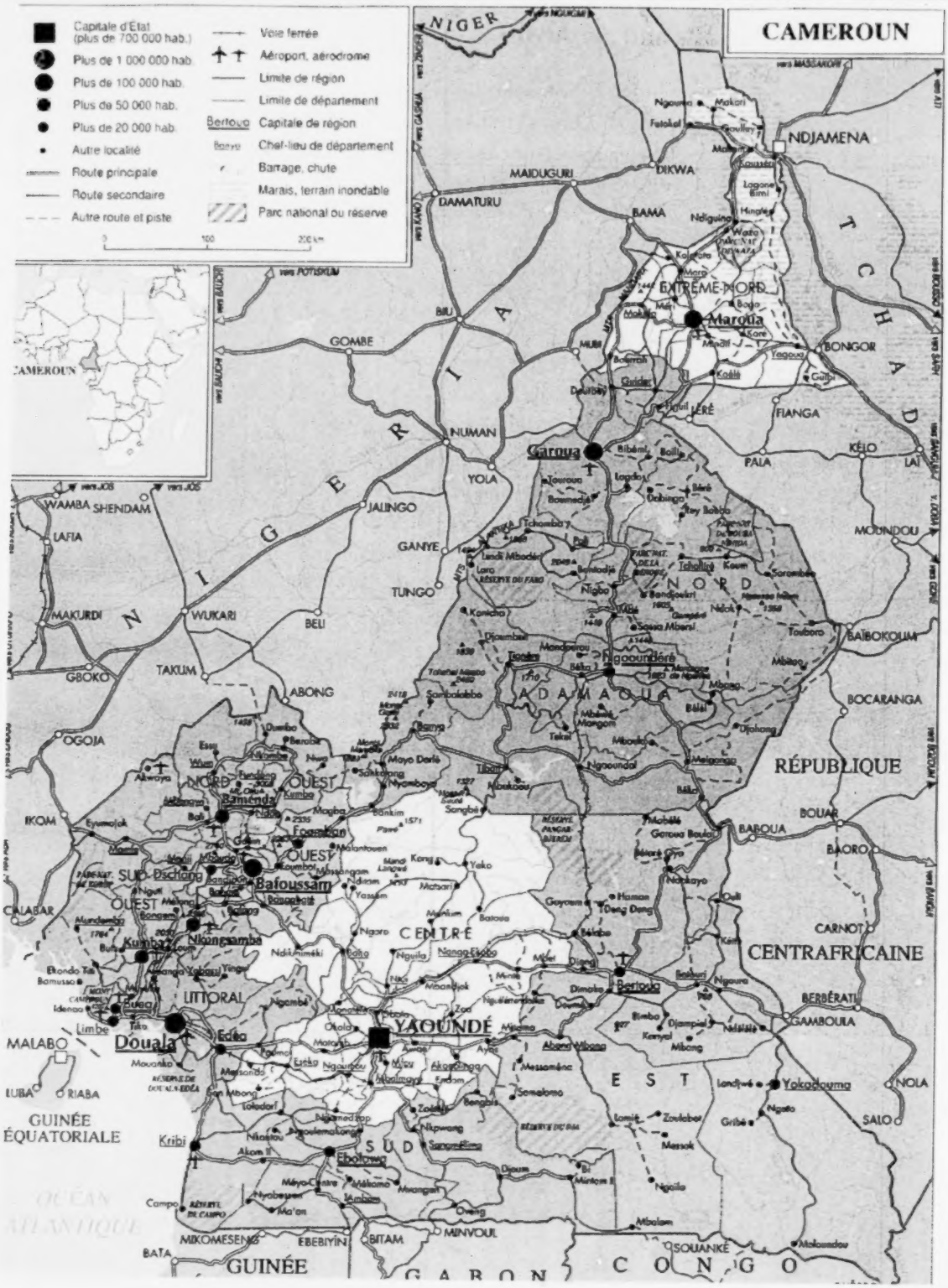
Abbreviations and acronyms

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CEMAC	Central African Economic and Monetary Community
CFAF	Coopération financière en Afrique centrale (Financial Cooperation in Central Africa) franc; CFA franc
EDS	Enquête démographique et de santé (Demographic and Health Survey)
EFA	Education For All
ELECAM	Elections Cameroon
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FM	Frequency Modulation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GESP	Growth and Employment Strategy Paper
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
ICC	International Criminal Court
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MICS	Multiple indicator cluster survey
MINAS	Ministry of Social Affairs
MINEDUB	Ministry of Basic Education
MINPROFF	Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Families
NCHRF	National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RFI	Radio France Internationale
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WHO	World Health Organization



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Introduction

1. This common core document from Cameroon has been elaborated in conformity with the guidelines contained in documents HRI/MC/2004/3 of 9 June 2004 and HRI/MC/2006/3 of 10 May 2006.

I. General factual and statistical information about the reporting State

A. Demographic, economic, social and cultural characteristics of the State

(a) Demographic characteristics

2. Cameroon is a country in Central Africa located in the Gulf of Guinea. It has an area of 475,440 km². It is bordered to the north by Lake Chad, to the north-east by Chad, to the east by the Central African Republic, to the west by Nigeria and to the south by Gabon, the Republic of the Congo and Equatorial Guinea.

3. It also has a 402 km coastline on the Atlantic Ocean. Cameroon is commonly called "Africa in miniature" because of its diverse population (it has around 250 local languages and dialects) and its natural environment, which comprises all the ecosystems found in Africa.

4. Results from the third General Census of the Population and Environment (known by its French acronym RGPH (*Recensement general de la population et de l'habitat*)) show that in 2005 the population of Cameroon was 17,463,836, of whom 8,831,800 were women and 8,632,036 were men; a ratio of 98 men to every 100 women. Women make up 50.6 per cent of the population while 49.4 per cent are men. The proportion of women is even higher in rural areas (51.3 per cent) compared to urban areas. The average household contains 4.4 persons.

5. The population of Cameroon on 1 January 2012 had risen to around 19,406,100.[1] With a growth rate of 2.9 per cent, life expectancy at 54.04[2] and a birth rate of 4.33 (in 2009),[3] it is estimated that at this pace, the population could double in size by the 2030s.

6. The population of Cameroon is extremely young. The median age across the population is 18 (among women 18.3 and among men 17.1). Thus, half of the population is aged under 18. The population aged under 15 represents 43.6 per cent of the total population and that under 25 represents 64.2 per cent; older people (aged 60 and over) represent 5 per cent of the total population.

7. The population of Cameroon is particularly unevenly spread across the country. Average population density is 37.5 persons per km². The highest densities are found in the Littoral and West regions (124 and 123.8 persons per km²,

[1] This figure is based on an analysis of demographic trends observed in censuses in 1976, 1987 and 2005.

[2] Idem.

[3] Idem.

respectively) while the lowest are in the North (25.5), Adamaoua (13.9), South (13.4) and East (7.1) regions.

8. The urban population has experienced remarkable growth. In 2005, urban areas were home to 8,514,936 persons while rural areas were home to 8,948,898 persons, which represents a level of urbanization of 48.8 per cent.

9. In 2005, there were two major cities in Cameroon, namely Yaoundé (population 1,907,479) and Douala (population 1,817,524), and 312 smaller towns.

10. The foreign population is for the most part African (94.9 per cent). Nigerians are by far the largest foreign community (39.31 per cent), followed by Chadians (27.4 per cent) and Central Africans (5.7 per cent). The French represent the largest foreign European population (1.79 per cent), followed by Italians (0.2 per cent), Germans (0.11 per cent) and the British (0.1 per cent). Asians and Americans account for 1.3 per cent and 0.32 per cent of the population, respectively.

(b) Social and cultural characteristics

11. Cameroon was formerly a German colony that became a mandate territory of the League of Nations under France and the United Kingdom following the First World War and later a United Nations Trust Territory following the Second. That dual guardianship bequeathed to Cameroon an anglophone and francophone system, with an extraordinary political, cultural, social and sociological structure contributing to the country's complexity and diversity.

12. French and English are the two official languages of the country, spoken by 70 per cent and 30 per cent of the population respectively. Spanish and German are also known by many Cameroonians. In addition, some 250 dialects are spoken by different ethnic groups. The 250 ethnicities that make up Cameroon are divided between three cultural groupings: the Bantu in the South, Littoral, South-West, Centre and South-East regions; the Bantoid or semi-Bantu in the West and North-West regions; and the Sudanese, Hamitic and Semitic peoples, who live in northern Cameroon and include the Peuls, Kapsiki, Matakam, Tupuri, Bum, Fulbe, Mbororo and Choa Arab peoples in the Adamaoua, North and Far North regions. Pygmies, considered the country's first inhabitants, are not included among these larger groupings. They live in the South, East and Centre regions.

13. Cameroon is a secular State. There are three main religions: Catholicism (38.4 per cent), Protestantism (26.3 per cent) and Islam (20.9 per cent). Animism and emergent religions (other forms of Christianity) are not widely followed and account for 5.6 per cent and 4 per cent, respectively, of all religious groups.

14. The level of adult literacy is 71.9 per cent.[4] Literacy among women (63 per cent) is much lower than among men (79 per cent). With a primary school completion rate of 73 per cent in 2010 and a literacy rate of 71.9 per cent in 2007, Cameroon is among those countries that have not yet met the Education for All (EFA) or Universal Primary Education objectives. Preschool education is available to 27 per cent of the country, but there are big differences between regions (levels fall below 6 per cent in the North and Far North regions). The national net primary school enrolment rate is 83.1 per cent. That figure masks gender disparities, which

[4] Unless otherwise stated, statistical data are accurate as at 31 December 2012.

are greater in the North and Far North, the most affected regions (where the difference is over 30 percentage points). In 2011, the primary school completion rate in priority education areas was 56 per cent. Overall, there is a large disparity between boys and girls with regard to primary school completion.

15. Tertiary education institutions offer a satisfactory range of options with eight State universities, 70 other educational establishments (faculties, *grandes écoles* and institutes), two online universities, one Pan-African university, one University Free Zone, 99 private academic institutions and 700 scientific laboratories.

16. With regard to health, the maternal mortality rate rose from 430 to 669 deaths per 100,000 live births between 1998 and 2004, according to demographic and health research (demographic and health surveys (EDS) II and III), and equalled 600 per 100,000 live births in 2010, according to a report entitled "Trends in Maternal Mortality: 1990-2010", published by WHO, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Bank in 2010.

17. With regard to child deaths, for the five years preceding the EDS-Multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) (2006-2011), the infant mortality rate was 62 deaths per 1,000 live births (62 per million) while the child mortality rate was 63 deaths per 1,000 live births (63 per million). The combined child and infant mortality rate is 122 deaths per 1,000 live births: one child in eight dies before the age of 5 years.

18. The average age at which Cameroonians have their first sexual relations is 15.8 years, and 12.2 per cent of married women aged between 15 and 49 years had their first sexual relations before their fifteenth birthday.

19. Abortions remain common and account for 20 to 40 per cent of maternal deaths. Contraceptive prevalence is estimated to be 14 per cent, while family planning needs that go unmet affect 44 per cent of in-union women.

20. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS fell from 5.5 per cent in 2004 (6.8 per cent and 4.1 per cent among men and women, respectively) to 4.3 per cent in 2012 (2.1 per cent and 5.6 per cent among men and women, respectively). The most affected, but to differing degrees among regions, are women, adolescents and young adults, among whom almost 7.6 per cent are pregnant women, for whom there is an increased risk of death for both mother and infant.

(c) Economic characteristics

21. Following independence in 1960, the Cameroonian authorities adopted a highly interventionist economic policy in order to lay the foundations for the country's development. Cameroon retained the colonial CFA franc as its national currency with fixed parity with the French franc and then the Euro (1 euro = 650 CFAF). The country's considerable potential for agriculture and livestock production triggered a long period of growth, supplemented by oil extraction, between 1960 and 1984.

22. From 1985 to 2000, however, Cameroon was in recession due to the collapse in the prices of primary materials. The slowdown of its economy was followed by a severe economic crisis, made worse by the devaluation of the CFA franc in 1994. The State therefore introduced a series of structural adjustment programmes from 1994 to 1997 with the help of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World

Bank. That approach led, among other things, to the privatization of many publicly-owned businesses, a freeze on civil service appointments, reduced State involvement in the economy, a fall in wages and the devaluation by half of the CFA franc.

23. The economic revival of the early 2000s did not, however, lead to an improvement of the social situation, which had deteriorated seriously during the years of crisis. The level of basic social services available was badly affected and employment rates fell by 10 per cent. Unemployment reached 17 per cent in 1995,[5] mostly affecting young people and women and leading to a significant growth of the informal sector.

24. Meanwhile, the country experienced rapid and poorly managed urbanization, boosted by a rural exodus and booming demographic growth. As a result, towns and cities, especially the largest (Yaoundé and Douala), encountered many problems, including the proliferation of informal settlements, poor public health, increased crime rates and higher levels of unemployment.

25. In October 2000 Cameroon joined the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) in order to fight the poverty experienced by half the country's population and to reduce its external debt, which was estimated to be 5.7 billion United States dollars by the end of 2005.[6] Considered eligible for debt relief from 2001, Cameroon designed a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in 2003 and reached the completion point in 2006. However, the Initiative has not significantly improved household living conditions despite a major reduction in poverty rates by 13 points between 1996 and 2001.

26. In February and March 2008, Cameroon experienced a social crisis. The poverty threshold was around 269,443 CFAF per adult per year compared to 232,547 CFAF in 2001. In 2007 it became clear that national poverty levels had barely fallen compared to 2001 levels (39.9 per cent compared to 40.2 per cent, respectively). Between 2001 and 2008, the annual average rate of GDP growth fluctuated between 3 and 3.7 per cent and gradually slowed to 2.4 per cent in 2010.

27. The estimated rate of GDP growth in 2012 is 5.9 per cent. Poverty severity, which measures inequality among poor people, was 5 per cent, showing that poor people are becoming less disparate, given that the equivalent figure in 2001 was 13.8 per cent. The depth of poverty has remained relatively stable at around 12 per cent (12.8 per cent in 2001 and 12.3 per cent in 2007).

28. That national average, however, masks several major disparities. Urban poverty has fallen 5.7 percentage points but rural poverty has increased by three percentage points — from 52 to 55 per cent — and mostly affects the northern and East regions. Rural areas accounted for almost 85 per cent of the poor population in 2001, and this figure rose to 89 per cent in 2007. Poverty exacerbation in rural areas is connected to the fact that poverty is increasing in farming households.

29. Cameroon has seen positive growth in the order of 3 per cent since 2009, which has led in turn to positive growth for the 10 per cent of poorest households.

[5] Republic of Cameroon, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 2003, p. 31.

[6] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) estimate, 2006.

30. The economically active population is around 8 million persons, of which 200,000 are employed in the public sector, around 800,000 in the formal private sector and the rest in the informal sector, including the rural economy.

31. In the strictest sense of the term, the unemployment rate is low (4.4 per cent), while the broad unemployment rate, which better reflects the Cameroonian context, is around 13 per cent. That level of unemployment, however, does not include underemployment, which is at a rate of 75.8 per cent and which is higher in rural areas (78.8 per cent) than in urban areas (57.4 per cent), a situation that has developed as a corollary of the large growth of the informal sector, which employs 90 per cent of the working population. Invisible underemployment, which consists of working people whose income is less than the minimum wage, represents 64.8 per cent of the working population, while visible underemployment, which concerns people who work less than the legal working week (40 hours per week), but not by choice, represents 11 per cent of the working population.

32. Households headed by employed persons are more affected by poverty (41 per cent) than those headed by economically inactive persons (29.9 per cent) or by unemployed persons (11.9 per cent), possibly because economically inactive and unemployed persons have fewer dependants and generally live alone. The proportion of employed persons in poverty (i.e. employed persons who live in a household in poverty as a proportion of total employed persons) was 38.3 per cent in 2007. One of the main explanations for poverty among employed persons continues to be remuneration levels; 40 per cent of employed persons received low wages (less than two thirds of the median daily wage) in 2010, of whom 29.8 per cent were men and 50.4 per cent women. Urban youth unemployment was 57.9 per cent.

33. Cameroon adopted a Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) in August 2009 as part of the revised PRSP. It is part of a shared development vision for Cameroon, a vision that sees Cameroon as an emerging economy by 2035, and sets goals for the first decade. The GESP targets acceleration of growth, formal job creation and poverty reduction.

34. The GESP strategy aims to increase the annual average growth rate to 5.5 per cent over the period 2010-2020; to reduce the underemployment rate from 75.8 per cent to less than 50 per cent by 2020 with the creation of tens of thousands of formal jobs each year for the next 10 years; and to reduce the income poverty rate from 39.9 per cent in 2007 to 28.7 per cent by 2020.

35. To that end, the Government proposes to accelerate current reform processes and to take all necessary measures to ensure that economic performance translates into tangible results, such as job creation, poverty reduction and a noticeable improvement of living conditions, particularly for women and young people.

B. Constitutional, political and legal structure of the State

(a) The legal system

36. The French and British mandates and Trust Territories left Cameroon with a colonial heritage that explains the existence of a legal dualism (the coexistence of

civil law and common law). That dualism is further complicated by the addition of customary and statute law.

37. The harmonization of the two legal systems is under way and reform of the court system has already begun.

38. The Cameroonian legal system is a monist system that recognizes the primacy of international law. In the hierarchy of norms, international agreements and treaties that have been ratified by Cameroon have a higher status than national laws.

(b) The political system

39. Cameroon acquired national sovereignty in 1960. West and East Cameroon were reunited on 1 October 1961. Following the referendum of 20 May 1972, Cameroon became a unitary State. Under the Constitution[7] of 18 January 1996, Cameroon is a unitary, decentralized and democratic State with a semi-presidential regime. The executive, legislative and judicial branches are separate.

40. Cameroon was a de facto one-party State from 1966 to 1990, when Act No. 90/56 of 19 December 1990 concerning political parties was adopted. Seven elections have been held since that change: 1992 (presidential), January 1996 (municipal), May and August 1997 (legislative), October 1997 (presidential), October 2004 (presidential), July 2007 (legislative and municipal) and October 2011 (presidential).

41. Since 1990, Cameroon has had a multiparty system. On 31 December 2012 there were 283 political parties in Cameroon, of which 11 had been recognized in 2012 and 17 in 2011.

42. Audio and visual media, and their regulation through non-governmental associations, have been liberalized considerably. Across Cameroon there are around 17 television channels, 120 radio stations, numerous press agencies and more than 600 private newspapers with varying publication frequencies, 87 advertising standards and guidance bodies, more than 500 cable broadcasting companies, online newspapers, and private publishers, etc.

43. To establish an association, a declaration procedure is now sufficient and the authorization requirement has been dropped. On 31 December 2012 a plethora of undeclared associations were in existence along with 356 foreign associations, 22 public-interest associations, 47 religious associations, 88 congregations of the Roman Catholic Church and 44 registered non-governmental organizations (NGOs), of which 16 were single-person entities.

44. The Constitution provides for three independent powers: the executive, the legislature and the judiciary.

1. The Executive

45. The President of the Republic is the head of State, and is the guarantor of the institutions of the Republic, national independence and territorial integrity,

[7] The Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon can be found at: http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/All-Treaties/Shared%20Documents/CMR/INT_All-Treaties_ACR_CMR_7255_F.pdf (in French).

responsible for safeguarding the Constitution and overseeing the smooth running of government bodies. He or she is elected by direct, fair and secret universal suffrage by a simple majority for a renewable seven-year term.

46. The Prime Minister is the head of Government and is in charge of its programme. The Government is responsible for implementing the national policy defined by the President and is appointed by the President.

2. *The Legislature*

47. Legislative power is held by Parliament, which consists of two houses: the National Assembly and the Senate. Parliament legislates and monitors government action. The National Assembly consists of 180 deputies elected by direct and secret universal suffrage for a five-year term. The Senate, whose installation is a central concern of the State, represents the decentralized regional authorities (DRAs). It consists of 100 members, 70 of whom are elected by regionally-based indirect universal suffrage and 30 of whom are appointed by the President.

3. *The Judiciary*

48. Under article 37 of the Constitution, justice is administered in the territory of the Republic in the name of the people of Cameroon. Judicial power is exercised by the Supreme Court, courts of appeal and tribunals. Judicial power is independent of the executive and legislative powers.

49. Alongside the civil courts of general jurisdiction there are also courts of special jurisdiction, namely military tribunals, the Court of Impeachment, the State Security Court and the Special Criminal Tribunal.

50. Military tribunals have jurisdiction in respect of all kinds of offences committed by members of the military with or without civilian accomplices, violations of legislation on weapons of war or defence, theft with firearms and any offence of any kind in which a member of the military was involved either during wartime or in an area where a state of emergency or martial law has been declared.

51. The Court of Impeachment has jurisdiction in respect of acts committed in the exercise of his or her functions by the President of the Republic in the event of high treason or by the Prime Minister, members of Government or persons ranking as such or senior government officials to whom powers have been delegated in the event of conspiracy against the security of the State.

52. Act No. 90/060 gives the State Security Court jurisdiction in respect of attacks on domestic security (espionage and treason; acts other than espionage and treason committed in peacetime that endanger national security or the nation; the unauthorized enrolment or recruitment of persons on Cameroonian territory into foreign armed forces; neglect or disregard of or failure to comply with regulations in a manner prejudicial to national security; failure to report wartime trade or correspondence with nationals or agents of enemy powers; and involvement in attempts to demoralize the army or nation during wartime) and external security of the State (secession, civil war, revolution, insurrection, formation of armed gangs), along with related offences.

53. Persons under the age of 14 years may not be tried in the State Security Court. Likewise, should the President of the Republic endanger State security in the

exercise of his or her functions, or should members of the Government conspire to endanger State security in the exercise of their functions, they, too, may not be tried in that Court.

54. The Special Criminal Tribunal, established in December 2011, has jurisdiction in respect of offences concerning the embezzlement of public funds in an amount greater than 50 million CFAF (around $100,000).

55. Besides those three powers, the State structure also includes the Constitutional Council and the Economic and Social Council.

56. The Constitutional Council is responsible for constitutional matters. It rules on the constitutionality of laws and is the regulatory body overseeing the operations of institutions (article 47). Pending the establishment of this body, the Supreme Court carries out its duties.

57. Established by the Constitution (article 54), the Economic and Social Council is governed by Law No. 86/009 of 5 July 1986. It is convened in response to requests referred to it by the President to carry out research or provide advice. Its action is obligatory for draft laws concerning economic programmes or plans. It consists of 85 members appointed by the President for a five-year term, comprising:

- 14 representatives of employed persons;
- 12 representatives of commerce and industry;
- 11 representatives of cooperatives, craft workers, family associations and youth movements;
- 4 representatives of the banking and finance sector;
- 14 representatives of agriculture;
- 30 members chosen for their experience in economic, health or sociocultural fields.

C. Administrative system

58. Three basic administrative models exist side by side: centralization, devolution and decentralization.

(a) Centralized administration

59. The centralized administration comprises all the services housed in the political capital, the headquarters of the institutions, that have responsibility for the whole of the territory. It includes the offices of the President and Prime Minister, the core services of the ministries and technical and advisory institutions.

(b) Devolved administration

60. Devolved bodies have authority in a given area but are accountable to central government. They include: 10 regions, headed by governors; 58 divisions, headed by prefects; and 360 subdivisions, headed by subdivisional officers. Each Government Ministry is also appropriately represented by devolved structures in the regions, divisions and subdivisions.

(c) Decentralized administration

61. Under article 55 of the Constitution, regional and local authorities are public law corporate bodies; they enjoy administrative and financial autonomy in the management of regional and local interests and are administered independently by elected councils under the conditions laid down by law. The regions and councils constitute the regional and local authorities. Councils exist at regional and subdivisional levels.

62. Any other type of regional or local authority may be created by law, according to the aforementioned article 55. Law No. 2004/018 of 22 July 2004, on the regulation of councils, provides for city councils to cover those urban agglomerations which, by virtue of their individual nature, are granted special status and are created by Presidential decree. A city council comprises at least two councils, which, in this context, are called district councils.

63. Decentralization is also implemented in Cameroon through numerous public administrative bodies and through a variety of parastatal enterprises active in various sectors of the economy and areas of society.

64. Provisions in the three decentralization laws of 2004 devolve more responsibility to officials in regional and local authorities for the design, financing, elaboration and implementation of development programmes and projects within their competence.

II. General framework for the protection and promotion of human rights

A. Acceptance of international human rights norms

(a) The main international human rights conventions and their related protocols

65. Cameroon is a party to the main United Nations legal instruments concerning human rights. The following instruments have been ratified by Cameroon:

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (27 June 1984*);
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (27 June 1984);
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (24 June 1971);
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (23 August 1994);
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (7 January 2005);

* *Translator's note*: Please note that the dates indicated in paragraphs 65-71 are not necessarily the dates of ratification of the instruments in question and in some cases conflict with the information available on the websites of the relevant bodies.

- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (19 December 1986);
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (11 January 1993);
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (30 May 2012);
- First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (27 June 1984);
- Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (July 2010).

(b) Other United Nations Conventions and related texts concerning human rights

66. The following conventions and texts are other major legal instruments to which Cameroon is a party:

- Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (19 February 1982);
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (State succession on 23 June 1961);
- Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (9 September 1967);
- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (ratified 18 May 2004) and its Additional Protocols, namely, the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol and the Trafficking in Persons Protocol (18 May 2004);
- United Nations Convention against Corruption (18 May 2004);
- Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (4 August 2006);
- International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (1 November 1976);
- International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women of Full Age (27 October 1961);
- International Agreement for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic as amended by the Protocol to that Agreement (3 November 1961).

1. International Labour Organization Conventions

67. Within the framework of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Cameroon has ratified the following conventions:

- Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) (7 June 1960);
- Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) (3 September 1962);
- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) (7 June 1960);
- Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97) (3 September 1962);

- Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98) (3 September 1962);
- Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) (15 May 1970);
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105) (3 September 1962);
- Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1957 (No. 106) (13 May 1988);
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) (13 May 1988);
- Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122) (25 May 1970);
- Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131) (6 July 1973);
- Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132) (7 August 1973);
- Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) (13 August 2001);
- Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) (4 July 1978);
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) (15 June 2002);
- Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144) (14 December 2011);
- Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155) (14 December 2011).

2. Geneva Conventions and other treaties concerning international humanitarian law

68. Cameroon is currently bound by the following conventions relating to international humanitarian law:

- Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field (First Geneva Convention), ratified 16 September 1963;
- Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea (Second Geneva Convention), ratified 16 September 1963;
- Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (Third Geneva Convention), ratified 16 September 1963;
- Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention), ratified 16 September 1963;
- Protocol additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts (Additional Protocol I), ratified 16 March 1984;
- Protocol additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts (Additional Protocol II), ratified 16 March 1984;

- Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 14 May 1954, ratified 12 October 1961;
- Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, ratified 12 October 1961;
- Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, ratified 19 September 2002;
- Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity (accession on 6 October 1972).

3. Regional and subregional instruments

69. Cameroon is a party to the following regional legal instruments:

- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, adopted on 27 June 1981 (21 October 1986);
- Cultural Charter for Africa, adopted in June 1981 (29 June 1981);
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, adopted 21 November 1989 (5 September 1997);
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (May 2009);
- African Youth Charter (11 January 2011);
- African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (July 2011);
- African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (14 December 2011).

70. On 19 July 2006, Cameroon signed the subregional Convention on Cooperation and Mutual Legal Assistance between the Member States of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

71. Cameroon has also ratified the following legal instruments:

- Legal Cooperation Agreement between the member States of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), adopted on 28 January 2004 in Brazzaville (Decree No. 2006/050 of 30 January 2006);
- Extradition Agreement between the member States of CEMAC, adopted on 28 January 2004 in Brazzaville (Decree No. 2006/048 of 30 January 2006);
- Non-aggression, Solidarity, and Mutual Assistance Pact between member States of CEMAC, adopted on 28 January 2004 in Brazzaville (Decree No. 2006/049 of 30 January 2006);
- Convention Governing the CEMAC Parliament, adopted on 28 January 2004 at Brazzaville (Decree No. 2006/051 of 30 January 2006);
- The Revised CEMAC Treaty and its related Conventions (15 July 2011);

- An ECCAS/ECOWAS Joint Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children in the West and Central African Regions (2006).

B. Legal framework within which human rights are protected at the national level

72. This section presents the specific legal context in which human rights are protected in Cameroon.

(a) Legal, administrative and other competent human rights authorities

73. Legal and administrative authorities share competence for human rights matters.

74. Judicial authorities have particular responsibility for law enforcement and comprise members of the judiciary assisted by criminal investigation officers.

75. Criminal investigation officers (commissioned and non-commissioned officers of the gendarmerie, acting or permanent commanding officers of a gendarmerie station or squad, police superintendents, police officers, police inspectors who have qualified and been sworn in as criminal investigation officers, public officials serving or acting as heads of external national security services) are tasked with identifying offences, gathering evidence, investigating perpetrators and accomplices and, when necessary, referring cases to the public prosecutor's office; executing the letters rogatory of judicial authorities; providing notification of judicial actions; receiving complaints and reports of offences; and carrying out preliminary investigations in accordance with conditions set out in law.

76. Criminal investigation officers work under the collective authority of members of the judiciary comprising the prosecution services at the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, regional courts or courts of first instance.

77. Those members of the judiciary, in their respective capacities (Public Prosecutor at the Court of Appeal, State Prosecutor etc.), manage and monitor the work of criminal investigation officers and detectives, and order criminal investigations. Reports of offences are referred in writing or orally to the State Prosecutor, who may also act on the basis of an official report brought by a competent authority or else institute proceedings ex officio.

78. The administrative authorities are charged with the promotion and, to a certain extent, the protection of human rights.

79. The majority of government ministries are responsible for the promotion and protection of several categories of rights or of one specific category of rights that pertain to their field of work, such as the Ministry of Social Affairs (rights of the child, disabled persons, indigenous populations, older people etc.), the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Families (rights of women), the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralization (public freedoms) and the Ministry of Communications (freedom of the press). The Ministries for Education, Health, Labour and Social Security, Culture etc. are responsible for the relevant rights while the Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development

and the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife are responsible for the right to a healthy environment.

80. Alongside those Ministries, the Ministry of Justice is responsible for the protection and monitoring of human rights and for action to counter torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. Since 2005 the Ministry has had a Directorate for Human Rights and International Cooperation.

(b) Remedies for human rights violations and systems for compensation and rehabilitation

81. Anyone whose rights have been violated may take the matter to the courts dealing with statute law (court of first instance, regional courts) or to courts dealing with traditional law (customary-law courts or trial courts). They may also petition the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms, which is concerned with violations of any human right, and international human rights bodies once domestic remedies have been exhausted.

82. In addition, any injured party may, when appropriate, seek compensation for the injury suffered and obtain damages through the courts. "Any person who has been wrongfully held in police custody or in pretrial detention may receive compensation, where proceedings result in the dismissal of the case or a final acquittal, if that person can demonstrate that he or she suffered serious harm due to that detention."[8] A committee is established to that end by the Code of Criminal Procedure. Rehabilitation is provided for under Chapter XII of the Code of Criminal Procedure and is "a measure which, unless otherwise provided by law, removes a conviction for serious or lesser offences and ends all accessory penalties and preventive measures except for detention in a health-care establishment or the closure of an establishment."[9] The rehabilitated person regains several rights that would otherwise be suspended, including the right to vote in elections and to testify in court.

(c) Constitutional protection of rights enshrined in various international legal instruments concerning human rights

83. The Constitution of 18 January 1996 assigned legal value to instruments concerning the protection of human rights by incorporating several provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and all ratified international human rights conventions.

84. The Preamble to the Constitution also declares the attachment of the Cameroonian people to the following universal values and principles enshrined in various international legal instruments:

- Equal rights and obligations for all;
- Freedom and security guaranteed for all;
- Prohibition of arbitrary commands or orders;
- Freedom of movement;

[8] Code of Criminal Procedure, 2007, article 236.
[9] Code of Criminal Procedure, article 676.

- Inviolability of residence and correspondence;
- Requirement that offences and penalties must be defined by law;
- Security of the individual;
- Requirement that the law may not have retroactive effect;
- Every person's right to a fair hearing before the courts;
- Freedom of opinion, religious belief, conscience and worship;
- Freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly and association;
- Union rights and the right to strike;
- Right to a healthy environment;
- Protection of minorities and indigenous peoples.

(d) Incorporation of legal instruments concerning human rights into national law and their enforcement in court or by administrative authorities

85. The Cameroonian legal system is a monist system that gives primacy to international law. Accordingly, article 45 of the Constitution states that "Duly approved or ratified international treaties and agreements shall, upon publication, have primacy over national laws, provided the treaty or agreement in question is applied by the other party." All the international legal human rights instruments to which Cameroon is a party are a source of law that is superior to national law in the hierarchy of legal standards. The provisions of those instruments may compensate for gaps in national law and those provisions are always applicable if there is a conflict between national and international law. Judges may directly apply the provisions that seem clear and precise to them and that do not require legislative translation or incorporation.

(e) National institutions or bodies responsible for ensuring respect for human rights

86. The first step a State takes to demonstrate its commitment to human rights is the creation of a permanent structure that has responsibility for the daily monitoring of human rights. That is precisely what has been done within the Ministry of Justice through the creation of a human rights directorate responsible, inter alia, for:

- Monitoring of human rights issues in general;
- Monitoring the implementation of international conventions on human rights;
- Providing the staff of the judicial services and the prison service with information about the rules concerning the protection of human rights and making sure they are aware of them.

87. Under the General Delegation for National Security there is a Special Police Oversight Division ("the police of police").

88. With regard to specific categories of rights, the Cameroonian Government has established a Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Families (MINPROFF) and a Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS).

89. In relation to the rights of women specifically, the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Families is responsible for the elaboration and implementation of governmental measures for the protection and promotion of the rights of women and the protection of families.

90. It has particular responsibility to:

- Ensure the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women;
- Ensure greater guarantees of equality for women in all areas of life;
- Research and present to the Government the conditions that facilitate the employment of women in all sectors of the economy;
- Research and propose measures to promote and protect the rights of the child.

91. For its part, the Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for the elaboration and the implementation of Government policy on prevention, support and protection in respect of socially vulnerable persons (children in difficulty, older persons, disabled persons, indigenous peoples).

92. It has responsibility for:

- Prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency and antisocial behaviour;
- Action against social exclusion;
- Action against trafficking of persons, especially children;
- Protection of victims of physical abuse;
- Monitoring of protection procedures for children in difficulty;
- Tracking and protection of victims of human trafficking;
- Monitoring of services for older persons and disabled persons;
- Monitoring of persons affected by drug use, in cooperation with the relevant authorities;
- Promotion of social reintegration;
- National solidarity;
- Monitoring of training schools for social workers;
- Management, oversight and monitoring of the establishments and institutions involved in the implementation of social welfare policy.

93. The two Ministries have devolved operational structures (in the regions and divisions) that help them fulfil their mission on the ground. The structures of the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Families mostly include women and family promotion centres and appropriate-technology centres. The structures of the Ministry of Social Affairs include 10 regional offices, 58 divisional offices, 250 welfare centres, 250 social welfare services and 13 specialized establishments and bodies. The social welfare services are directed at vulnerable indigenous populations and specific organizations, such as schools and universities, hospitals, courts, police stations and prisons.

94. With regard to refugees, on 28 November 2011 the President of Cameroon signed the implementing decree for Act No. 2005/006 of 27 July 2005 on the status of refugees. That decree, No. 2011/389, concerns the organization and functioning of the bodies that manage the status of refugees and establishes those bodies' procedural regulations. It also makes operational the two committees provided for by article 16 of the 2005 Act, namely the Committee on Eligibility and the Committee for Appeals, and establishes them under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

95. The Committee on Eligibility is composed of eight members and is joined by an observer from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in an advisory capacity. The committee provides the first ruling on whether to grant refugee status. It may deliberate for a period of two months, renewable once, before ruling on a case. If asylum seekers arrive en masse, the Committee may decide, subject to possible later individual investigations, to grant them refugee status prima facie.

96. Should a decision of the Committee on Eligibility be challenged, the Committee for Appeals provides the final ruling and has two months to consider the case from the date of referral. It is composed of five members. One member of UNHCR may be invited to its meetings as an observer in an advisory capacity.

97. Once an asylum seeker has been granted refugee status, the technical secretariat of the Committee on Eligibility supplies the asylum seeker and all the members of his or her family with certificates of refugee status pending issuance of refugee cards valid for a renewable period of two years. If refugee status is lost or denied, the person in question has six months to find asylum in another country. Funding for the bodies that manage refugees comes from annual allocations within the budget for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from contributions from UNHCR and from various donations and bequests.

98. Ultimately, the various ministries of the Cameroonian Government are all concerned, to differing degrees, with the protection and promotion of human rights. Civil and political rights are covered by the Ministry for Regional Administration and Decentralization. Economic, social and cultural rights come within the scope, as appropriate, of the Ministries of Public Health, of Basic Education, of Secondary Education, of Higher Education, of Art and Culture, of Labour and Social Security, of Employment and Professional Development etc. (see the Decree on the Organization of Government[10] of 9 December 2011).

(f) Acceptance of the jurisdiction of a regional human rights court or other mechanism and the nature and progress of recent and pending cases

99. Although there is an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, Cameroon has not yet ratified its statutes. Cameroon is, however, a party to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and falls under the jurisdiction of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). The Commission is responsible for the promotion of human and peoples' rights and for guaranteeing

[10] The Decree on the Organization of Government can be accessed on the following website: http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/All-Treaties/Shared%20Documents/CMR/INT_All-Treaties_ACR_CMR_7255_F.pdf (in French).

that those rights are protected in Africa. In that context, the Commission has jurisdiction to hear cases brought by individuals.

100. The table below shows cases concerning Cameroon that have been referred to the Commission since 2003.

Table 1

Status of cases brought against Cameroon to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights as at 30 July 2012

Case	*Plaintiff*	*Comments*
Case No. 266/2003	Kevin MGWANGA GUMNE et al.	Case heard in 2009 Recommendations for Cameroon included: • Reform the Higher Judicial Council • Pay compensation to businesses whose interests have been harmed by banks' discriminatory treatment
Case No. 384/2009: Non-compliance by Cameroon with its obligations arising from the 2009 decision	Kevin MGWANGA GUMNE	
Case No. 287/2004	Titanji DUGA Ernest (on behalf of CHEONUMU and others)	Decision under reserve
Case No. 290/04	Open Society Justice Initiative (on behalf of Pius Njawe Noumeni)	Final decision
Case No. 336/2007	AFTRADEMOP and Global Welfare	Decision on admissibility expected
Case No. 336/2007	Kevin MGWANGA GUMNE	Decision on admissibility expected
Case No. 369/2009 (March 2009)	Léké Théodore	Decision on admissibility expected
Case No. 380/09 (June 2009)	Global Conscience Initiative	Decision on admissibility expected
Case No. 390/10 (September 2010)	Abba BOUKAR	Awaiting official correspondence from the Commission
Case No. 389/10 (2010)	MBIANKEU Geneviève	Decision on admissibility expected
Case No. 415/12 (2012)	Edouard Nathanael ETONDE EKOTO	Decision on admissibility expected
Case No. 416/12 (2012)	Jean-Marie ATANGANA MEBARA	Decision on admissibility expected

C. Framework within which human rights are promoted at the national level

101. The following paragraphs describe the efforts made by Cameroon to promote respect for human rights, including the role played by parliament and civil society in that regard.

(a) The role and work of parliament in the promotion and protection of human rights

102. Under the Constitution, laws are voted on by Parliament. National law governs:

- The fundamental rights, obligations and guarantees of citizens:
  - Safeguards of individual freedom and security;
  - Rules governing public freedoms;
  - Labour rights, trade union rights, rules governing social welfare;
  - The duties and obligations of the citizen in respect of national defence requirements;
- The status of persons and the property rights system:
  - Nationality, the status of persons, matrimonial system and succession and gifts;
  - Rules governing civil and commercial obligations;
  - Movable and immovable property ownership system;
- Political, administrative and judicial organization concerning:
  - Rules governing the election of the President of the Republic and elections to the National Assembly, the Senate and regional and local bodies, and the system of referendum consultations;
  - Rules governing political associations and parties;
  - Organization, functioning, powers and resources of regional and local authorities;
  - General rules on the organization of national defence;
  - Judicial organization and the creation of various types of court;
  - Definition of serious and lesser offences and the institution of penalties of all kinds, criminal procedure, civil procedure, measures of execution and amnesty;
- The following financial and personal asset matters:
  - Currency issuance rules;
  - Budget;
  - Creation of duties and taxes and determination of their basis of assessment, rates and methods of collection;
  - Land tenure, State lands and mining;
  - Natural resources;
- Programming of the objectives of economic and social action;
- The education system.

103. Besides those legislative responsibilities, members of Parliament are also involved in the promotion of human rights, hence the creation of a network of parliamentarians concerned with the sustainable management of the ecosystems in Central Africa with a special emphasis on the protection of the rights of indigenous populations. A number of seminars are also organized by or for parliamentarians to promote human rights.

(b) National institution for the promotion and defence of human rights

104. In November 1990, Cameroon established a national committee on human rights and freedoms, which became the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms under Act No. 2004/016 of 22 July 2004, amended in 2010. The body thereby acquired greater authority and independence in the protection of human rights.

105. The Commission is thus an independent institution that can advise, observe, evaluate, discuss, debate, promote and protect issues of human rights and freedoms.

106. "[The Commission:]

- Receives any report of a violation of a human right or freedom;
- Carries out inquiries and any necessary investigation into violations of human rights and freedoms and reports on them to the President of the Republic;
- Alerts relevant authorities when human rights and freedoms have been violated;
- Undertakes, where necessary, visits to prisons, police stations and gendarmerie stations, accompanied by the competent public prosecutor or his or her representative;
- Makes recommendations to the Government on steps to take with regard to human rights;
- Where applicable, is responsible for all relations with the United Nations, international organizations and foreign committees and associations with similar missions."

107. The Commission, as a national human rights institution with "A" accreditation from the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, is responsible for overseeing the entirety of human rights matters in Cameroon.

108. In respect of financial resources, the Commission receives an annual allowance as part of the State budget (art. 20 of the Organization Act[11]). The allowance, which in 2004 amounted to 250 million CFAF (around $500,000), rose to 500 million CFAF (around $1 million) in 2006 and to 700 million CFAF (around $1.4 million) since the 2011 budget.

[11] The law on the creation, organization and functioning of the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms can be accessed on the following website: http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/All-Treaties/Shared%20Documents/CMR/INT_All-Treaties_ACR_CMR_7255_F.pdf (in French).

109. In addition, the Commission has, since 2011, received an investment budget from the State, which initially was capped at 250 million CFAF (around $500,000) and was increased in 2012 to 400 million CFAF (around $800,000). The investment budget allows the Commission to invest in appropriate infrastructure, in accordance with the recommendations of the Paris Principles, to ensure the smooth functioning of its services.

110. Furthermore, the Commission received special funding from the Government in 2011 for the purchase of office furniture and resources. It is also allowed to use funds from development partners (art. 20 of the Organization Act). In that context, it has enjoyed support for some years from partners such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), Sightsavers, the United Kingdom High Commission and others.

111. With regard to human resources, the Commission comprises 30 members (commissioners) who represent the National Assembly, the Supreme Court, the Bar, universities, religious denominations, women's organizations, civil society organizations, trade unions, the National Medical Council, State and independent press and government agencies (social affairs, justice, prison affairs and promotion of women).

112. It has a permanent secretariat, ten regional offices, of which six are operational, and some 100 officials. It also has focal points in the majority of ministerial departments.

(c) Dissemination of human rights instruments

113. The different Government bodies responsible for human rights in general or for categories of rights, as mentioned previously, and the Commission organize regular activities to promote human rights, such as seminars, workshops, awareness-raising campaigns and observance of international days.

114. As part of those activities, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the human rights treaties to which Cameroon is a party have been translated into local languages in order to facilitate dissemination and understanding among persons who do not speak either of the two official languages of Cameroon.

115. The texts are distributed as pamphlets and booklets to the populations in question.

116. In 2011, for example, as part of the project entitled "Support for greater understanding and effective implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women", that Convention was translated into pidgin English (a mixture of simplified English and local languages) and into three native languages of different regions: Fulfulde (northern region), Bulu (southern region) and Ghomálá (western region).

(d) Raising human rights awareness among public officials

117. Training programmes for all the staff of the different bodies that comprise the Cameroonian public services contain modules on human rights education. This is

the case primarily for institutions that train the police, the gendarmerie, the army, the prison services and the Cameroonian judiciary.

118. Thus, under the basic training programme of the National Police College, for example, human rights lessons given to student police commissioners and student police officers are based on four modules, where each module addresses different topics and is allocated significant teaching time, as shown below:

- Module 1: Human rights and police ethics (four hours):
  - Ethical and legal police behaviour;
  - Role of police in democracies;
  - Police and non-discrimination;
  - Brutality and torture;
- Module 2: Police obligations and duties (six hours):
  - Police investigations (presumption of innocence);
  - Arrest;
  - Detention;
  - Use of force and firearms;
  - Civil unrest, martial law and armed conflict;
- Module 3: Groups requiring special protection or specific treatment (six hours):
  - Minors;
  - Women's rights;
  - Refugees and prisoners;
- Module 4: Leadership, guidance and monitoring (eight hours):
  - Human rights and police leadership, guidance and organization;
  - Human rights violations and protection mechanisms;
  - Investigations of police violations;
  - Enhancing professionalism.

119. At the Muntengéné Police Training and Development Centre, the basic training programme covers various topics.

120. For student police inspectors, the following topics are addressed:

- Types of human rights;
- Main international human rights instruments;
- Importance of human rights for the police;
- Human rights and the professional ethics for police;
- Human rights and civil liberties;

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- Human rights and maintenance of public order;
- Police powers in the application of laws;
- Treatment of vulnerable persons;
- Human rights violations by the police.

121. Those lessons take up two hours per week over a two-year training period.

122. Over a one-year period, student police cadets receive instruction in human rights and international humanitarian law for two hours a week, covering:

- Geneva Conventions;
- The Hague Conventions;
- International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement;
- National troubles and tensions;
- Requirements of applying the law in practice;
- Application of international humanitarian law.

123. Those targeted courses are designed to give officials a sound understanding of human rights and their protection.

124. Following basic training, members of the police who have been promoted or are undergoing career development are obliged to attend a refresher course on human rights at a training centre.

125. In order to balance the requirements of maintaining public order and respecting the rights and freedoms of citizens, all training and refresher courses on maintaining public order must contain a section on human rights and personal freedoms. Hence, prior to the presidential election of 9 October 2011, a refresher course on maintaining public order was held from 12 to 30 September 2011, the purpose of which was to give police officers the skills to maintain or re-establish order efficiently while respecting human rights.

126. Furthermore, senior officials and heads of units who are responsible for the supervision of members of the police at all levels as they carry out their daily duties are required to hold workshops to make sure that their colleagues are in possession of basic data on respect for police ethics and the police code of conduct, which, among others, requires police officers to:

- Respect and protect human rights;
- Respect the rights to freedom, to security of the person, to private and family life, to the inviolability of the home and to privacy of correspondence;
- Restrict these rights only within the law and as the law prescribes;
- Refrain from any discrimination based on sex, race, ethnic origin, language, religion, education, political affiliation, disability, social position or other reasons prohibited by the Constitution or by international treaties and conventions;
- Be courteous to service users;

- Refrain from all harassment;
- Apply rational and proportional enforcement measures, particularly in relation to maintaining order during operations.

127. In every subject covered by the primary school teacher training programme, emphasis is also placed on respect for human rights, and the rights of the child in particular.

128. The Government of Cameroon regularly organizes seminars and workshops on human rights across the country in order to give members of the judiciary, social workers, teachers, the police, prison and health-care staff and members of civil society organizations the appropriate skills to help them better promote and protect human rights.

129. Such events include:

- Training workshop on human rights and a training workshop aimed at the security forces on the suppression of human trafficking in Cameroon, organized by the American Bar Association and the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms at the National Police College in Yaoundé;
- Meetings devoted to the fight against child exploitation, organized by the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL);
- Training workshops on human rights for members of the judiciary, lawyers and criminal investigation officers, organized by the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms;
- Several days of public hearings on child sex abuse, organized by the Commission in September 2011;
- Briefing session on the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in September 2011, organized by the Commission;
- Workshops on alternatives to imprisonment;
- Training courses for members of the judiciary provided by the Ministry of Justice on the application of the main human rights conventions;
- Training courses for notaries and civil registrars provided by the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Families on the application of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and of other legal instruments related to the protection and promotion of women and families;
- Training workshops on juvenile justice held in five major Cameroonian cities (Douala, Kribi, Garoua, Ngaoundéré and Bamenda);
- Training for professionals in the field of juvenile justice;
- Training for security forces in combating torture;
- Training in maintaining order during crisis situations;
- Discussion workshops on the effective prevention of torture in prisons and other places of detention in Cameroon;

- Seminar on combating commercial sexual exploitation, organized by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) and ILO in 2011.

130. With a view to encouraging the trend for judges to be consistent in applying the provisions of the human rights conventions, the Directorate for Human Rights and International Cooperation of the Ministry of Justice has set itself the task of raising the awareness and training levels of members of the judiciary and members of the prison service with regard to human rights issues. In this way, the many challenges that arise from the application of human rights conventions — such as knowing the conventions, making the right choice of the applicable text or law, adopting a human rights-based approach — can be solved.

131. In addition, the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms regularly organizes training and awareness-raising activities[12] for, among others, members of the judiciary, health-care and security workers, members of the prison service and the media.

132. Awareness-raising aims to:

- Enhance State employees' understanding;
- Align practice with human rights norms;
- Understand the causes and consequences of violations of human rights;
- Identify challenges and obstacles to the effective implementation of international norms;
- Gain the necessary understanding and skills to properly investigate suspected human rights violations;
- Promote measures and initiatives to prevent human rights violations.

(e) Raising human rights awareness through educational programmes and Government-sponsored public information

133. The National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms has designed and is introducing the National Human Rights Education Programme in primary and secondary curricula. The Programme, launched in 2008, aims to teach citizens about their rights. Thus, a student workbook and a teacher's handbook on human rights have been written and made available to pupils and teachers. A total of 667 workbooks and handbooks have been provided to the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB) by the Commission in the following quantities:

- 164 workbooks in French;
- 124 workbooks in English;
- 202 handbooks in French;
- 177 handbooks in English.

[12] A list of the Commission's recent activities (for the years 2010, 2011 and 2012) can be accessed on the following website: http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/All-Treaties/Shared%20Documents/CMR/INT_All-Treaties_ACR_CMR_7255_F.pdf (in French).

134. Training workshops for regional teaching inspectors from the education ministries on the use of the human rights workbook and handbook are also arranged. The workshops are primarily aimed at building national capacities to spread, promote and integrate human rights principles in the development process.

135. The following issues have been studied in that context:

- The content of the workbooks that are not part of the official curriculum and the development of a curriculum jointly drawn up by the Ministry of Basic Education and the Commission;
- The identification of situations and instances of human rights violations and the ways to treat human rights topics;
- The choice of content for the workbook and the identification of situations where human rights are violated;
- The identification of appropriate teaching material, follow-up strategies and activity evaluation.

136. In addition, two information guides on the prevention of child sexual exploitation have been produced and have been distributed among children, advising them on both the mindset and the behaviour that can help keep them safe, and among parents and persons who are employed to look after children, with a view to improving their ability to protect children from violence.

137. To further the implementation of the National Human Rights Education Programme, in 2006 the Ministry of Basic Education set up a committee tasked with the integration of human rights education into primary school curricula. The committee has already made significant progress in a number of areas, including:

- The planning and monitoring of training programmes;
- The selection of 50 pilot schools (five per region);
- Follow-up to strategies that help improve teachers' understanding of international and regional legal instruments on human rights protection;
- The coordination of efforts to create an atmosphere conducive to human rights education;
- Support for activities relating to the collection and distribution of information and initiatives on human rights education.

138. Activities to promote capacity-building also include:

- The organization of legal clinics: the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Families has organized, in partnership with UNFPA, legal clinics in the western, central and southern regions. These have been able to take action on several basic problems that have hindered women in the enjoyment or exercise of their rights and to address a number of violations of women's rights. These cases have been followed up on an individual basis within the regional offices of the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Families.
- Young female sex workers, who are vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation, are encouraged by the Cameroonian Government to join forces,

organize and undertake training in the creation and management of income-generating projects;

- As part of the implementation of a project to introduce a support system for women in centres for the advancement of women, microprojects have been set up to provide funding for women at the end of their training in order to facilitate their successful socioeconomic and occupational integration;
- Action taken against early marriage includes, inter alia, awareness-raising among women, families, communities and opinion-formers about the harmful consequences of early marriage, appeals to opinion-formers and the establishment of local committees to fight female genital mutilation in targeted areas of the country.

(f) Promotion of human rights awareness through the mass media

139. Human rights awareness-raising and education also takes place among communities in the form of radio programmes, one example being the weekly broadcast on State radio, which covers the entire country, of a bilingual programme entitled "The court of rights and freedoms" by the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms. The Commission also publishes a quarterly bilingual magazine on fundamental rights and freedoms entitled "Born Free".

140. The General Delegation for National Security has started an information and awareness-raising campaign aimed at the general public through its weekly radio programmes entitled "At the service of each and all" and "Police channel" in order to highlight the role and daily work of the police, the duties and responsibilities of police officers and the rights, responsibilities and obligations of citizens. Publications by the Department, entitled "To serve", "Thermopolice" and "Opuspolice", have the same aims.

141. In partnership with the Commission and the United Nations Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, the General Delegation for National Security makes every effort to ensure that citizens are aware of their duty to respect the laws and regulations of the country and to participate in development. Some ministries, particularly the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Families, broadcast weekly programmes on the rights of the child, disabled persons, indigenous peoples and women, among others.

142. The Ministry of Basic Education also has allocated airtime on State radio, which it uses in its efforts to raise awareness among the education community of human rights issues. "Social vision", put out by the Ministry of Social Affairs, "Focus on the environment", put out by the Ministry of the Environment, and "Women, families and society", put out by the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Families, all have that same purpose. These programmes are mostly broadcast in local languages on community radio and on regional channels.

143. There is also a network of journalists who support human rights and who are affiliated to the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms.

(g) The role of civil society and steps taken by the Government to encourage and promote the development of civil society with a view to ensuring the promotion and protection of human rights

144. Civil society has a role of recognized importance in the promotion of human rights in Cameroon. To encourage its work in that area, arrangements are to be made to facilitate the creation of NGOs and associations. In order to promote their development, two separate laws enshrine the right to free association and assembly: Act No. 90/053 of 19 December 1990 on freedom of association and Act No. 99/014 of 22 December 1999 on non-governmental organizations. Those texts provide for the establishment of associations, a procedure governed by a system of declaration whereby the association is granted legal personality. The simplification of that procedure has resulted in the establishment of an impressive number of associations, of which hundreds work in the field of human rights. There is a Cameroonian network of human rights organizations active in this area.

145. NGOs are granted tax and customs exemptions. Thus, under the Act of 22 December 1999, "duly registered NGOs shall be exempt from taxation and registration fees, in accordance with the General Taxation Code and the Registration Code. They shall also be exempt from value added tax, in accordance with legislation in force."[13]

146. Furthermore, civil society organizations that are active in the field of human rights enjoy the support of the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms. They are provided with training in order to enhance their capacities. Training workshops on the submission of reports to treaty bodies, on the follow-up of recommendations arising from the special procedures and the universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council and on international instruments are therefore regularly organized for the benefit of civil society organizations.

(h) Budgetary funds allocated specifically for the implementation of human rights obligations

147. Since responsibility for the monitoring of human rights is shared by a number of authorities, the budget allocations for the implementation of international obligations concerning those rights can only be calculated through an analysis of each authority's budget.

148. Thus, as mentioned previously, the operating budget of the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms increased from 250 million CFAF (around $500,000) in 2004 to 700 million CFAF (around $1.5 million) following the 2011 budget period.

149. Each ministerial department that is responsible for a specific category of human rights is allocated appropriate funding enabling it to carry out its relevant statutory activities.

150. In its efforts to promote and protect human rights, the Government enjoys the support of international, multilateral and bilateral partners.

151. With specific regard to the agencies of the United Nations system, human rights have an important role in the work of those agencies and also in the recently

[13] Act No. 00/014 of 22 December 1999, article 18.

established United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Cameroon for the period 2013-2017. In addition, a number of bilateral partners are increasingly working with the Government in efforts to support human rights. International assistance is focused mainly on the rights of women, of the child and of vulnerable persons, on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the universal periodic review and on the improvement of conditions of detention.

(i) The role of the reporting process in the promotion of human rights at the national level

152. The elaboration of periodic reports in respect of the human rights conventions is based on a process of consultation involving the relevant centralized, devolved (regional) and decentralized (local) public authorities.

153. The National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms, together with other independent bodies (the National Anti-Corruption Commission, Elections Cameroon (ELECAM), the National Agency for Financial Investigation and city councils), the National Assembly, parastatal bodies and civil society organizations (including NGOs, representatives of the media and of the Bar and representatives of vulnerable groups and of target population groups), are also involved in that process.

154. Each party involved in the elaboration process has a preparatory role (data collection) and an endorsement role (validation of the periodic report and review of recommendations arising from the submission of the report). Document validation generally takes place over three days of seminars and workshops.

155. As an overview, the process involves the following steps:

- Establishment of a coordination body;
- Collection of data from the various parties mentioned previously;
- Elaboration of the first draft of the report;
- Development of the first draft during meetings;
- Overall validation of the report;
- Submission for endorsement by the Office of the President of the Republic or the Office of the Prime Minister.

156. The validation process receives media coverage.

157. Once the report has been approved, it is presented and made available to the public through the competent ministries. A radio broadcast is usually made to inform the public of the main recommendations issued by the treaty bodies and the ways in which they can access the report and the concluding observations. Those observations are communicated to all stakeholders (public and parastatal bodies, the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms, civil society organizations, parliament, etc.), which are requested to provide comments and indicate their planned implementation activities.

D. Other information related to human rights and to the follow-up of international conferences

158. With specific regard to the Millennium Summit of the United Nations, Cameroon published national reports in 2002, 2008 and 2010 on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

159. The 2010 report highlights trends indicating that significant progress has been made, in various sectors and fields, towards improving living conditions and quality of life. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that any of the MDGs will be met by 2015. The report recognizes, however, that MDG 2 (achieve universal primary education) and the fifth target of MDG 8 (in cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications technologies) are well within reach.

160. The table below summarizes the main conclusions of the report.

Table 2
Status of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals

No	*Goal*	*International and national targets*	*Likelihood that the goal or target will be met*		*State of the enabling environment*
			2015	*2020*	
1	Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	**Target 1.A**: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than $1 a day	Unlikely	Unlikely	Average
		Target 1.B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people	Possible	Probable	Weak
		Target 1.C: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	Possible	Possible	Average
2	Achieve universal primary education	**Target 2.A:** Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	Possible	Probable	Strong
3	Promote gender equality and empower women	**Target 3.A**: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015	Possible	Probable	Average
4	Reduce child mortality	**Target 4.A**: Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate	Unlikely	Unlikely	Weak

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No	Goal	International and national targets	Likelihood that the goal or target will be met		State of the enabling environment
			2015	2020	
5	Improve maternal health	**Target 5.A**: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	Unlikely	Possible	Average
6	Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	**Target 6.A**: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	Possible	Possible	Average
		Target 6.B: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases	Unlikely	Possible	Weak
7	Ensure environmental sustainability	**Target 7.A**: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources	Possible	Probable	Average
		Target 7.B: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation	Probable	Probable	Weak
		National target: Significantly improve, by 2020, the environment in which Cameroonians live	Possible	Probable	Weak
8	Develop a global partnership for development	**Target 8.A**: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system	Possible	Probable	Average
		Target 8.B: Address the special needs of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States	Possible	Possible	Average
		Target 8.C: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries to enable young people to find decent and useful work	Possible	Possible	Average

No.	Goal	International and national targets	Likelihood that the goal or target will be met		State of the enabling environment
			2015	2020	
		Target 8.D: In cooperation with developing countries, design and apply strategies that enable young people to find decent and useful work	Possible	Possible	Average
		Target 8.E: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications technologies	Possible	Probable	Strong

161. Cameroon has also submitted a report in respect of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and a report on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the universal periodic review.

162. In addition, progress reports are usually presented at the review sessions of conferences and summits organized by the United Nations General Assembly and Economic and Social Council or at follow-up or review conferences.

III. Substantive human rights provisions

163. The following paragraphs set out the provisions in place for non-discrimination, remedies, procedural guarantees and participation in public life, in that order.

A. Non-discrimination and equality

164. The Constitution of Cameroon and its preamble declare that "the human person, without distinction as to race, religion, sex or belief, possesses inalienable and sacrosanct rights". The Constitution also declares the attachment of the Cameroonian people to the principle of equal rights and obligations for all.

165. Violation of the prohibition of all discriminatory practices has been established as an offence under Cameroonian law. Accordingly, article 241 of the Criminal Code, entitled "Insulting a race or religion" states that:

> "(1) Any person who engages in insulting behaviour as defined in article 152[14] against a race or religion to which a number of citizens or residents belong shall be punished with a term of between six days and six months of imprisonment and a fine of between 5,000 and 500,000 CFA francs.

[14] Article 152 of the Criminal Code defines insulting behaviour as "defamation, slander or threat by means of gestures, words or shouting in public places or by any other means intended to secure public attention."

(2) If the offence is committed by means of the press or radio, the maximum fine shall be increased to 20,000,000 CFA francs.

(3) The penalties provided for in paragraphs (1) and (2) above shall be doubled if the offence is committed with the intention of inciting hatred or contempt among citizens."

166. Article 242 of the Criminal Code, entitled "Discrimination", provides that "Any person who refuses another person access either to a public place or to employment because of that person's race or religion shall be punished with a term of between one month and two years of imprisonment and a fine of between 5,000 and 500,000 CFA francs."

167. Article 143, which penalizes favouritism, states that any public official who makes a decision with respect to parties as a favour or out of enmity towards one of the parties shall be punished with a term of between one and five years' imprisonment. The penalty shall be doubled if the public official is a member of the judiciary, federal inspector[15] or prefect.

168. With regard to equality, article 1 of the Criminal Code states that criminal law is applicable to all persons. Equality before the courts is understood as unrestricted access to justice and a fair hearing before a judge. Accordingly, the preamble to the Constitution of Cameroon provides that every person has the right of recourse to justice.

169. The law guarantees all persons the right of recourse to justice. No person may be subjected to pressure or intimidation on account of his or her origins or religious, philosophical or political beliefs or opinions, without prejudice to respect for public order and accepted moral standards.

170. To facilitate access to justice for the most disadvantaged persons, Cameroon adopted Act No. 2009/004 of 14 April 2009 on the organization of legal aid. The Act enhances access to justice for the most disadvantaged persons by providing for their total or partial exemption from legal fees.

171. With regard to non-penal matters, specifically social matters, segregation in the workplace is both a criminal and a civil offence. As a criminal offence, discrimination is penalized under Order No. 73/15 of 22 May 1973 on the organization of social welfare (article 180) and under Act No. 92/007 of 14 August 1992 on the Labour Code (articles 4 and 168). As a civil offence, dismissal based on discrimination is considered unfair dismissal by courts with jurisdiction over social affairs.

172. Besides the Constitution and the Criminal Code, laws on the prohibition of discrimination and the promotion of equality for all have been adopted in a number of areas.

173. Thus, in respect of education, article 7 of Act No. 98/04 of 14 April 1998 on the orientation of education in Cameroon, provides that "the State shall guarantee all persons equal opportunities for education regardless of gender, political, philosophical or religious opinion or social, cultural, linguistic or geographic

[15] The position of federal inspector, which existed when the Criminal Code was adopted in 1967 no longer exists.

background". In addition, article 6(2) of Act No. 005 of 16 April 2001 on the orientation of higher education states that higher education "shall contribute to promotion of the rule of law through the fostering of a culture of respect for justice, human rights and freedoms [...] contribute to the eradication of all forms of discrimination and encourage the promotion of peace and dialogue."

174. With regard to political matters, the Government has set itself the following targets:

- Representation of all population groups, without distinction of any kind, on all electoral lists, in reflection of the composition of the various constituencies;
- Guaranteed presence of national minorities in all electoral processes;
- Involvement of all duly registered political parties in elections.

175. Under the Electoral Code, political parties are obliged to demonstrate that local sociological characteristics have been reflected in the preparation of candidate lists. As a mosaic of peoples, languages and cultures, Cameroon often finds itself challenged by its own diversity and the difficulties that that diversity causes in the expeditious application of provisions on non-discrimination. The unique nature of the Cameroonian social environment has led the State to implement, in order to fight discrimination, a policy based on the principle of national unity, which is the cornerstone of the Constitution.

176. Accordingly, the State has taken certain steps to instil national unity without jeopardizing diversity. As a result, no information that could be used to discriminate appears on civil registers, the national identity card or any other official document, except gender. Neither ethnicity nor race are indicated in population censuses. The absence of such data, considered in the Cameroonian context as both discriminatory and largely irrelevant, explains why figures on the ethnic distribution of the population are unavailable. By taking these steps, Cameroon wished to avoid the harmful effects that such specific information could have on the maintenance of peace and of the social equilibrium.

177. Steps are also taken to fight discrimination based on gender or disability.

178. For example, Cameroon adopted Act No. 2010/002 of 13 April 2010 on the protection and promotion of disabled persons.

179. The Act provides for a number of positive discrimination measures, including the following:

- A contribution from the State to cover education and basic professional training expenses for disabled pupils and students;
- Full or partial exemption from school and university fees and the offer of bursaries for disabled persons or for children born to disabled parents;
- Exemption from tax or customs duties;
- Support for the involvement of disabled persons in various areas of political and social life.

B. Effective remedies

180. By penalizing violations of fundamental rights, Cameroonian law provides for the possibility for all persons who have been victims of such violation to seek legal redress. Any Cameroonian citizen or any resident may apply to national courts with jurisdiction over either criminal or civil matters in order to seek justice if, in that individual's opinion, his or her rights have been violated. In criminal matters, the competent courts may be petitioned in relation to various serious and minor offences.

181. In general, in cases before the civil courts, in application of the principle of civil responsibility or liability as prescribed by articles 1384 and 1385 of the Civil Code, compensation may be awarded.

182. Pursuant to article 436 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, "appeals may be made against any ruling, including rulings made by military tribunals, unless otherwise provided for by law."

183. Rulings made by military tribunals may be appealed against in civil courts, particularly in courts of appeal. The regional courts are competent to apply the principle of habeas corpus.

184. Besides appeal, legal remedies include objection, appeal on points of law and review.

185. In addition, extrajudicial remedies are available to persons who have been victims of a human rights violation, and therefore of discrimination, through the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms.

186. The National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms is a national institution responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights and has the competence to receive any report of violation of human rights and freedoms. It may use mediation and conciliation between parties in non-criminal matters. It may also take up independently any matter that is brought to its attention.

187. Once all national remedies have been exhausted, the injured party may apply to the treaty bodies of the United Nations or the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to defend his or her rights.

C. Procedural guarantees

188. Act No. 2005/007 of 27 July 2005 on the Code of Criminal Procedure offers a better guarantee of defence rights throughout legal proceedings.

189. The guarantees concern:

- **The information provided to the accused person on the nature of and grounds for the charge**: depending on whether or not the accused person is in detention, such information is relayed to him by a bailiff, a criminal investigation officer or a judge. "Except in the case of serious offences and offences discovered while they are being committed or immediately afterwards, any person who carries out an arrest must give his or her name, inform the person being arrested of the grounds for his or her arrest and, if

necessary, allow a third party to accompany the arrested person in order to confirm the location to which he or she is being taken" (article 31 of the Code of Criminal Procedure). Throughout legal proceedings, suspects are also made aware of their rights and may receive legal counsel;

- **The period of time for the preparation of the defence**: "an appointed lawyer shall be informed, by any written means, of the date and time of the court appearance at least forty-eight (48) hours before that time if he or she resides at the seat of the court or seventy-two (72) hours in advance if he or she resides away from the seat of the court. (3) The case file shall be made available to the lawyer at the investigating office twenty-four (24) hours before each police interview or examination" (article 172 of the Code of Criminal Procedure). Notice periods are also given during pretrial proceedings;

- **The selection of and communications with a legal counsel**: the choice of legal counsel is unrestricted: "An accused person in detention may, unless otherwise prescribed by an investigating judge, correspond freely with any person of his or her choice"; "Visits by a legal counsel to his or her client may take place only between the hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.," (articles 239 and 240 of the Code of Criminal Procedure);

- **The period of time within which judgements must be issued**: in criminal matters, time limits are established only for the pronouncement of a decision from the time of closure of the hearing. Thus, the Code of Criminal Procedure provides that a judgement must be issued either immediately or within 15 days following the closure of the hearing. The hearing may be reopened before the pronouncement of a decision or following deliberation. Rulings on appeals must be made within two months. In the case of appeal against an interlocutory decision determining a procedural issue, the court of appeal must give its decision within seven (7) days counting from the day after the appeal is lodged. In the case of offences against legislation governing the press, the competent court ordinarily issues a ruling within 15 days following the date of the first session and within 48 hours during election periods.[16] With regard to social matters, article 145 of the Labour Code[17] states that "the Court may adjourn, as necessary, for two weeks at most, and deliberation may not exceed eight days";

- **Presence in court**: the accused person must appear in court. However, "an individual charged with an offence punishable by a fine or a term of imprisonment of no more than two years may request, in writing, to be tried in absentia" (article 350 of the Code of Criminal Procedure);

- **Witness testimony**: the Code of Criminal Procedure authorizes an investigating judge to call or summon any witness to testify if the judge deems that person's testimony to be useful in establishing the truth;

[16] Article 83 of Act. No. 90/052 of 19 December 1990, amended and supplemented by Act No. 96/052 of 4 January 1996.

[17] The Labour Code can be accessed on the following website: http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/All-Treaties/Shared%20Documents/CMR/INT_All-Treaties_ACR_CMR_7255_F.pdf (in French).

- **Confession**: a statement of confession is invalid unless it is given without coercion.

190. With regard to military tribunals, Cameroon conforms with the United Nations principles that concern such jurisdictions in respect of procedural guarantees.

191. In addition:

- For violations of common law, the maximum period of custody is 48 hours, renewable once. However, that time period may be extended twice with the written permission of the State Prosecutor;
- With regard to the fight against organized crime involving organized groups for which longer periods of custody are required, a criminal investigation officer may request a governor to grant administrative detention. In such cases, the maximum period of custody for a person in a police station is one month, at the end of which the case is referred to the competent prosecuting authorities.

192. All custody rights are respected throughout police investigations. They include, in particular:

- The possibility to telephone family members;
- The possibility to be examined by a physician;
- Access to legal aid;
- Custody of women in police stations and not in cells;
- Access to toilets and water.

193. Failure to observe some of those provisions may invalidate the proceedings. Under article 584 of the Code of Criminal Procedure:

> "(1) The presiding judge of the regional court for the area in which the accused was arrested or is detained, or any other trial judge of and appointed by that court shall be competent to consider requests for immediate release from detention on the grounds of unlawful arrest or detention or of failure to comply with the procedures prescribed by law.
>
> (2) He or she shall also be competent to consider complaints in respect of administrative detention measures.
>
> (3) Petitions may be made either by the arrested or detained person or by any person acting on his or her behalf."

194. In order to ensure respect for those rights, inspections of cells are regularly carried out by the prosecution service and the senior officials of the police stations or divisions in question and by the Special Police Oversight Division (the so-called "police of police"). The international and national legal framework (including international conventions, the Constitution and the Code of Criminal Procedure) is regularly strengthened through memorandums and circulars that recall and highlight the provisions of those legal instruments that concern respect for human rights and freedoms.

195. For example, in circular No. 00700/SESI of 23 June 1993 on abuse and cruel and inhuman treatment, addressed to the senior officials of the central and local

national security services, the Delegate-General for National Security prescribed the measures to be applied in all services and divisions with the utmost rigour, namely:

- Only police superintendents and police officers shall be empowered to place individuals in custody, under the permanent review of the State Prosecutor;
- The persons in charge of police stations or the heads of criminal investigation units shall check on the situation of persons held in police custody every morning in order to identify, in time, any sick persons requiring immediate transfer to a hospital for appropriate medical care;
- The police custody registers shall be inspected every day by those same persons in charge, who must verify the actual presence and good health of the detainees;
- The prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment at police stations, particularly the use of a baton or a whip as a means to extract confessions, the practices known as "café" (bastinado) or the "balançoire" ("the swing"), which involve the beating of detainees, and the improper use of aerosols and service weapons.

196. The provisions of that text were reinforced by circular No. 00001806/DGSN/SG/SDD of 22 June 2011, which obliges senior officials to monitor their colleagues in the field and makes them accountable, through negligence, for any misconduct on the part of those colleagues.

197. The State has also taken steps to improve conditions of custody in the detention facilities of police investigation units. As a result, all members of the police who are involved in criminal investigation procedures are recommended to pay particular attention to respect for the rights of persons in custody. The measures include:

- The prohibition of criminal investigation officers from placing in custody any person who has a known address, except in the case of serious offences or offences discovered while they are being committed or immediately afterwards, or if there is serious and clear evidence implicating that person;
- The segregation of women and minors in custody from adult men;
- Compliance with the limits applicable to periods of custody;
- Systematic application to the State Prosecutor to extend periods of custody when so required;
- The obligation of criminal investigation officers to treat persons in custody humanely;
- The right of all persons in custody to receive visits from their lawyers, family and physicians;
- The guaranteed provision of food by the State.

198. It should also be highlighted that the General Delegation for National Security and the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms work together in order to protect and promote human rights.

D. Participation in public life

199. The right to participate in public affairs is guaranteed to all citizens. The Constitution of Cameroon enshrines universal direct suffrage.

200. The Electoral Code provides for conditions of election and eligibility without discrimination of any kind.

201. In order to vote, a person must meet the following criteria:

- Be a Cameroonian citizen, regardless of gender, race or religion;
- Have reached the voting age of 20 years;
- Enjoy civil and political rights;
- Be registered on the electoral roll (have a voter card).

202. The criteria established by the Electoral Code with respect to eligibility to stand for election are fairly unrestrictive and vary according to the type of election.

203. (a) To be eligible to stand for election to the office of President of the Republic, candidates must:

- Be eligible to vote;
- Be a Cameroonian citizen by birth;
- Be able to read and write in French and English;
- Have reached the age of 35 by the date of election;
- Prove uninterrupted residency in Cameroon for at least 12 consecutive months;
- Pay a deposit to the Treasury, which is returned should the candidate receive at least 5 per cent of all votes;
- Be nominated by a legal political party or, if standing as an independent candidate, have collected 300 signatures — 30 per region — from persons who hold elected or representative office.

204. (b) To be eligible to stand for election to the office of deputy of the National Assembly, candidates must:

- Be eligible to vote;
- Have reached the age of 23 at the date of election;
- Be able to read and write in one of the two official languages;
- Be nominated by a legal political party;
- Have paid a deposit to the Treasury.

205. (c) To be eligible to stand for election to the office of senator, candidates must:

- Be eligible to vote;
- Be over the age of 40 at the date of election.

206. It should be noted that for senatorial elections, article 20 of the Constitution of 18 January 1996 states that every region shall be represented in the Senate by 10 senators, of which seven shall be elected by indirect universal suffrage on a regional basis and three shall be appointed by the President of the Republic.

207. (d) To be eligible to stand in municipal elections, candidates must:

- Be eligible to vote;
- Have reached the age of 23 at the date of election;
- Be able to read and write in French or English;
- Be nominated by a legal political party.

208. (e) To be eligible to stand in regional elections, candidates must:

- Be eligible to vote;
- Be a departmental delegate;
- Be a representative of a traditional leader.

209. Since December 2000, political parties have benefited from public funding for election campaigns. Thus, a subsidy of 1.5 billion (one billion five hundred million) CFAF has been granted to political parties for the 2010 financial year, distributed as follows: 750 million CFAF for parties represented in the National Assembly, in proportion to the number of seats obtained; and 750 million CFAF for political parties that have obtained at least 5 per cent of votes in at least one constituency in the 2007 legislative elections.

210. As of the presidential election of 9 October 2011, Cameroonian citizens based or resident abroad are permitted to take part in presidential elections.

211. An independent election monitoring body, ELECAM, was established in 2006. Its operation and composition is based on the principle of dialogue between ELECAM and the other actors in the election process through the inclusion of representatives of political parties in its proceedings.

212. ELECAM organized the presidential election of 9 October 2011, in which 23 candidates stood, two of whom were women. The Government and political parties campaigned intensively to encourage persons of voting age (20) to register to vote. Turnout for the election was 65.82 per cent.

213. Steps have also been taken to encourage disabled persons to participate in the electoral process. In that respect, article 105, paragraph 1, of the Electoral Code states that "Any voter suffering from a disability or whose physical state makes them unable to participate in voting without assistance [...] may enlist the assistance of a voter of their choice." Furthermore, a project entitled "Accessible elections for persons with disabilities" has been led by the Ministry of Social Affairs with the support of Sightsavers, an NGO, and some 100 civil society organizations to facilitate disabled persons' participation in the various elections.

214. Related activities include:

- The identification and adaptation (including ramp construction, office lighting, manufacture of low-rise tables to give wheelchair users easy access to the ballot box) of 12 pilot polling stations accessible to persons with different

categories of disability in six regions of Cameroon (Adamaoua, Centre, Far North, Littoral, West and South-West);

- The training of disabled persons and their support groups on the legislation governing presidential elections;
- The organization of meetings with political leaders on disability issues;
- Financial and technical support given to disabled persons' support groups to raise awareness among disabled persons with a view to their large-scale registration on the electoral roll and their full and dignified participation in the electoral process;
- Appeals to ELECAM for the inclusion of a disability field in the registration software for the electoral roll;
- The selection of six spokespersons representing the "Accessible elections" platform during the election campaign;
- The broadcasting of radio and television programmes to encourage all disabled persons to participate in the electoral process.

215. Women, who are often victims of gender discrimination, are involved in public affairs on an equal footing with men. While women enjoy the right to vote, their representation in political life, although growing, remains modest.

216. Of the offices held until 2013, in the National Assembly women accounted for 13.9 per cent of substantive deputies (compared to 11.1 per cent in 2007) and 21.1 per cent of alternate deputies. In the councils, women represent 15.5 per cent of municipal councillors (compared to 13 per cent in 2007), 6.7 per cent of mayors (3 per cent in 2007) and 20 per cent of deputy mayors (12.7 per cent in 2007).

217. As at 9 December 2011, women accounted for 15 per cent of Government ministers, their number having increased from 7 in 2009 to 9.

218. In order to promote universal suffrage fully, Cameroon introduced a change to the election system in February 2012 through a redesign of the electoral lists and a reform of the Electoral Code. In addition, biometric voter cards have been introduced.

219. The desire to ensure that all citizens can participate in public affairs has driven the decentralization process initiated in 1996. Legislators believe that this means of power-sharing will, in the medium and long term and through the transfer of powers, make it possible for an ever greater degree of attention to be paid to the social, educational, cultural, economic and tourism problems of the population groups that are expected to become the keystones of local development policies.

220. The first transfers of State powers to councils and city councils took place in 2010. Those powers concerned the following areas:

- Drinking water supply;
- The construction and maintenance of rural roads and the construction and management of crossings;

- The management and maintenance of centres for the promotion of women and families;
- The promotion of rural development and agricultural production activities;
- The provision of help and support to the poor and persons in need;
- The promotion of pastoral farming and fish farming activities;
- The organization of cultural events and support for cultural organizations;
- The construction, equipping and management of integrated health-care centres;
- The construction and maintenance of primary schools and their equipment;
- The craft industry;
- Urban planning and the construction and maintenance of roads and railways;
- The construction, equipping, maintenance and management of regular markets;
- The adaptation and operation of tourist sites of local interest;
- The management of professional training centres.

221. The total amount of financial resources transferred to the regional and local authorities equalled 23,072,363,000 CFAF (around 35,224,981 euros). A further 9.694 billion CFAF (around 140.8 million euros) were allocated as a general provision for decentralization under the State budget for the 2010 financial year.

222. Since another way to participate in public affairs is through joining the civil service, persons employed by public authorities are recruited from among Cameroonian citizens who satisfy the necessary civil and academic requirements, without any form of discrimination. In order to ensure the equitable representation of all the regions of Cameroon at all levels of administration, a policy of regional balance is currently in force with respect to recruitment to the civil service. In addition, the public authorities make efforts to ensure representation of all the regions of the country in nominations to positions of responsibility within the civil service. Moreover, 10 per cent of positions are reserved for disabled persons, to the extent that it is possible to fill those positions.

IV. Conclusion

Position of Cameroon on major human rights issues

223. Some issues relating to human rights are of concern to the Cameroonian authorities and/or are often the focus of international attention.

224. The issues in question include the International Criminal Court (ICC), female genital mutilation, homosexuality, the death penalty and offences against legislation governing the press.

225. The position of Cameroon on those issues is presented below.

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1. Ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

226. Cameroon welcomed the establishment of ICC, in the negotiation process for which it played a very active role. Although it is not yet a party to the Rome Statute, Cameroon plans to incorporate the crimes under the jurisdiction of the Court (genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes) into its national legislation.

227. The question of acceding to the Rome Statute is the subject of serious consideration by the Cameroonian authorities.

228. Until such time as Cameroon accedes to the Rome Statute, it is maintaining fruitful cooperation with the ICC, particularly in the field of judicial cooperation.

229. Thus, since 2007, Cameroon has welcomed ICC officials conducting missions to investigate cases linked, inter alia, to Darfur and the Central African Republic.

230. With regard to Darfur, the ICC officials met non-nationals resident in Cameroon who were of interest in the investigation.

231. With regard to the Central African Republic, the officials were seeking to identify safe places where witnesses could be interviewed.

232. A request from the ICC in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo is currently being considered.

233. With respect to non-judicial matters, Cameroon organized a seminar on the ICC and national jurisdictions in October 2010.

2. Female genital mutilation (FGM)

234. Female genital mutilation in Cameroon mainly encompasses circumcision and associated practices (clitoridectomy, infibulation etc.). It is practiced only by minorities in two of the 10 regions of the country. Victims of FGM account for less than 1 per cent of the entire population. Although small, that percentage is significant enough to have prompted the Cameroonian authorities to take steps to tackle the phenomenon, which is already in sharp decline in Cameroon.

235. The Cameroonian Government is also strongly committed to the fight against FGM and so-called "breast ironing". Steps taken to eradicate traditional practices that are harmful to women have resulted in:

- Greater involvement of traditional and religious authorities and of circumcisers in combating FGM, including the establishment of 16 local committees for the fight against FGM in two departments. The committees are run by teams composed of traditional and religious authorities, the leaders of organized groups and former circumcisers, under the supervision of administrative authorities. The Government provides resources for the work of the committees;
- Material, financial and technical support for circumcisers to help them find alternatives to circumcision;
- The solemn and symbolic surrendering by professional circumcisers of circumcision knives to the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Families during an awareness-raising campaign. That gesture marked the circumcisers' renunciation of their practice and their acceptance of the appeal made to them

by the public authorities, which are committed to ensuring the circumcisers' transition to new employment through support for their income-generating activities.

236. Although there is no law which specifically criminalizes forms of female genital mutilation, individuals who carry out such acts are nonetheless prosecuted whenever they are identified. Such acts are categorized as offences against physical integrity, as established in articles 275 to 281 of the Criminal Code, which concern, respectively, murder, premeditated murder, serious injury, fatal injury, serious wounding, wounding and minor injury.

237. However, if the victim is 15 years old or younger, the act is punishable as the offence of violence against a child, as provided for in article 350 of the Criminal Code.

238. The penalties provided for under articles 275, 277 and 278 of the Criminal Code are death and life imprisonment if the offences established under those articles are committed against a minor aged 15 or younger, and the penalties provided for under articles 279(1), 280 and 281 are doubled in such cases.

239. Breast flattening, which is more commonly, but less appropriately, known as "breast ironing", is often considered a form of female genital mutilation and consists not of using a hot iron to flatten the chests of young girls but of using a warmed tool, generally of wood or polished stone, to massage the developing breasts of prepubescent girls. Its purpose is to delay the development of certain secondary sexual characteristics and to prevent early sexual activity and thus early marriage.

240. The harmful effects of breast flattening on the physical and psychological health of young girls have not yet been scientifically proven. Furthermore, since awareness of and access to chemical and hormonal treatments are limited, breast flattening is, for now, the main cultural and locally-driven response of certain ethnic groups in Cameroon.

241. As a precaution, and until a study has been carried out on the practice, the Government remains alert to the issue of breast flattening and will take steps to eradicate or suppress it, as necessary.

3. Decriminalization of offences against legislation governing the press

242. Freedom of the press is a reality in Cameroon. The preamble to the Constitution states that "freedom [...] of expression, of the press, of assembly and of association, the right to organize and the right to strike shall be guaranteed".

243. Act No. 90/52 on social communication, amended by Act No. 96/04 of 4 January 1996, introduced a liberal information system. It is supplemented by Decree No. 2000/158 of 3 April 2000 on the conditions and procedures for the establishment and operation of private audiovisual communication companies.

244. The Decree provides for the effective liberalization of the airwaves and introduces a special licensing system for audiovisual companies. The Cameroonian authorities have demonstrated a high degree of flexibility with regard to the possession of operating licences. Companies that are unable to pay the associated charges are permitted to continue to operate. Only four licences — one for radio

broadcasting, two for television broadcasting and one for cable television — have been issued to date.

245. In addition to the State television network, however, there are eight private television networks, 54 private radio stations, 17 audiovisual production companies and 500 cable television companies. There is also a State radio network comprising 10 regional stations, including six commercial FM stations, and 23 community radio stations. Furthermore, three international radio stations are authorized to broadcast in Cameroon (RFI, BBC and Africa No.1).

246. With regard to the press, 600 to 700 publications have been officially declared by their promoters and comprise:

- Three public press titles;
- Six daily nationwide publications;
- 300 weekly publications, which account for 56.8 per cent of officially registered newspapers;
- Monthly publications, which account for around 25.6 per cent;
- Fortnightly publications, which account for 14.4 per cent of all publications.

247. In addition, a national commission has been established to consider requests for public funding to develop privately owned communications organizations. The commission meets once a year.

248. While State censorship has been abolished, offences committed through the press remain punishable under criminal law, in order to promote responsible and respectful conduct on the part of journalists and to protect public order and the rights of other citizens.

249. In most criminal cases in which a journalist is tried, proceedings are brought not by the public prosecution service but by the individuals who consider that the journalist has violated their rights. It should be noted that legal proceedings are generally not initiated with respect to the numerous articles containing false or ungrounded information about the Government and/or State institutions.

250. Journalists, members of NGOs and human rights defenders carry out their activities freely. If they voluntarily diverge from the legal purpose of their organization by engaging in activities that violate the rights and freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, peaceful citizens may sometimes become the victims of those violations and, consequently, demand justice. The judicial harassment of which some human rights defenders complain very often derives from the conflict between their actions and the rights of other citizens. The State also ensures the protection of human rights defenders acting within the framework of their activities.

251. In Cameroon, all journalists, press agencies, radio stations and television networks have the right to collect, process and publish any information they possess, whenever and wherever they desire. They must also accept responsibility for any consequences thereof, as provided by law. That system, which applies to any liberal information system, stems from article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

4. Decriminalization of homosexuality

252. The criminalization of homosexuality does not, according to the Cameroonian legal system, conflict with the provisions of article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or those of article 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, since homosexual persons are not prevented from enjoying rights or availing themselves of services on the grounds of their presumed sexual orientation.

253. The issue concerns practices that conflict as much with legislation currently in force as with what democratic Cameroonian society today still considers morally acceptable.

254. Moreover, the position set out in Cameroonian legislation is supported by the relevant provisions of article 29, paragraph 2, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 29, paragraph 7, of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which constitute saving clauses that can be invoked by any democratic society in respect of its specific system of moral values.

255. Those provisions state respectively that the State may limit rights and freedoms for the purpose of "meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society" and that the individual is obliged "to preserve and strengthen positive African cultural values in his relations with other members of the society."

256. Against the backdrop of current African culture, homosexuality is not deemed an acceptable value by Cameroonian society but is widely considered to be an activity that conflicts with accepted moral standards and should be suppressed.

257. Furthermore, under article 347 bis of the Criminal Code, "any person who has sexual relations with a person of the same sex shall be punished with imprisonment for a term of six months to five years and with a fine of between 20,000 and 200,000 CFA francs".

258. However, there is no unlawful intrusion into the private affairs of individuals and no prima facie investigations are carried out in Cameroon. Lawful arrests and convictions of individuals for homosexual activity generally occur in relation to individuals who have committed homosexual acts on public ways or in public places, or follow complaints or reports that give rise to further investigation in conformity with the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

259. It is a point of honour for the Government that the rights of all citizens be respected without any discrimination.

5. The death penalty

260. Cameroon is a de facto abolitionist State. The death penalty has not been carried out for over a decade. It remains a part of State legislation as a deterrent and because it is supported by public opinion. Death penalties are systematically commuted to life imprisonment following application for a pardon.

261. The application for a pardon in respect of the death penalty is provided for under article 22 of the Criminal Code, which states that "(1) All death sentences shall be submitted to the President of the Republic with a view to the exercise of his or her right to grant a pardon. (2) Until such time as the President decides to refuse

or grant a pardon to the convicted individual, the death sentence shall not be carried out."

262. Accordingly, applications for pardon are made automatically even when pardon has not been expressly requested by the convicted individual.

263. The death penalty is retained only as a deterrent and is applicable only to the most serious offences, such as premeditated murder.

6. Conformity of places of detention with international standards

264. The conditions of places of detention are a continual concern of the Government. The Government has already implemented a programme to improve conditions of detention (known by its French acronym PACDET) and has begun a project on prison modernization and preparation for the social reintegration of prisoners, which will lead to the construction of six new prisons, each with a capacity of 300 persons, and the refurbishment of 24 existing prisons.

265. The Government will continue to take steps to bring Cameroonian prisons into conformity with international standards, as far as resources allow.

266. The ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment will, as of now, make possible the international inspection of Cameroonian places of detention.

7. Rules governing public demonstrations and associations

267. The right to assembly and other forms of public demonstration is guaranteed by Act No. 90/55 of 19 December 1990 on assembly and public demonstrations. The Act requires that assemblies and public demonstrations be announced, with authorization no longer required.

268. Under the Act, the holding of any public meeting, that is, a meeting held in a public place or a place that is open to the public, may be of any nature. However, it must be announced in advance.

269. That announcement must be submitted to the regional or local administrative authority that has jurisdiction over the place in which the meeting will be held at least three complete days before the meeting. The announcement must include the full names and addresses of the organizers of the meeting and its purpose, location, date and time. It must be signed by one of the organizers.

270. Under article 5 of the Act, a board of three persons must be created for each public meeting. The board is responsible for maintaining order, for preventing any violation of the law and for prohibiting any speech that conflicts with public order or accepted moral standards or that could incite the commission of minor or serious offences.

271. Legal remedy is provided for should a demonstration be prohibited.

272. With regard to penalties, the Act provides, without prejudice to prosecution for minor and serious offences and in conformity with article 231 of the Criminal Code, for the punishment of whomever:

- Participates in the organization of a public meeting that has not been announced in advance;

- Makes an announcement in such a way as to mislead the authorities in respect of the conditions and purpose of the meeting.

273. The same penalties apply to any person who, before the announcement or after the lawful prohibition of a meeting, invites, by any means, persons to take part in that meeting or makes an incomplete or inaccurate announcement in such a way as to mislead in respect of the conditions of the proposed demonstration.

274. Those penalties also apply to organizers of any public demonstration that has not been duly announced or to persons who continue to organize a public demonstration after having received notification of its lawful prohibition.

275. Freedom of association, as proclaimed in the Constitution, is guaranteed to all natural or legal persons throughout of Cameroonian territory. It consists of the possibility to create, join or not join an association.

276. That freedom is enshrined in Act No. 90/53 of 19 December 1990 on freedom of association.

277. With the exception of foreign associations or religious associations that are subject to authorization, all forms of association are subject to a declaration procedure. Should the prefect not object within two months of the declaration being made, the declaration is considered to have been accepted and the association acquires legal personality.

278. If the basis or purpose of an association run counter to the Constitution, legislation or accepted moral standards, or if the association seeks to threaten the security, integrity or Republican nature of the State, its establishment will be null and void.

279. Cameroon is determined to strengthen its cooperation with the United Nations treaty bodies and with other international organizations in order to improve the human rights situation in its territory.

280. In that regard, the lack of statistical data and of a reliable system for data collection and the need to keep the public and stakeholders informed and aware remain major challenges and areas of concern for the Cameroonian Government.

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Annex

Statistical indicators

Demographic indicators

No.	Indicators	Men	Women	Men and women combined	Year	Unit
1	Population size	9 599 224	9 806 876	19 406 100	2010	Population
2	Average annual rate of population growth	///	///	2.6	2010	%
3	Population density	///	///	41.6	2010	persons/km²
	Land use	*Urban*	*Rural*	*Urban and rural combined*	*Year*	*Unit*
4	Land area (1 000 ha)					
5	Arable land (1 000 ha)					
6	Permanent crops (1 000 ha)					
7	Pasture (1 000 ha)					
8	Irrigated land (1 000 ha)					
	Population distribution by religion	*Urban*	*Rural*	*Urban and rural combined*	*Year*	*Unit*
9	Catholicism	46.1	31.0	38.4	2005	%
10	Protestantism	26.0	26.6	26.3	2005	%
11	Islam	17.3	24.4	20.9	2005	%
	Population distribution by area	*Men*	*Women*	*Men and women combined*	*Year*	*Unit*
12	Urban area	///	///	48.8	2005	%
13	Rural area	///	///	51.2	2005	%
	Age composition of the population	*Urban*	*Rural*	*Urban and rural combined*	*Year*	*Unit*
14	Under 15	39.2	47.8	43.6	2005	%
15	15-59	57.4	45.7	51.4	2005	%
16	60 and over	3.4	6.5	5.0	2005	%
17	Dependency ratio	74.3	118.8	94.6	2005	%
18	Proportion of population under 15	39.2	47.8	43.6	2005	%
19	Proportion of population over 64	2.2	4.4	3.4	2005	%
	Birth statistics	*Urban*	*Rural*	*Urban and rural combined*	*Year*	*Unit*
20	Gross birth rate (per 1 000)	34.6	41.3	38.1	2011	‰
21	Total general fertility rate (number of children per 1 000 women aged 15-44)	141	223	178	2011	‰
22	Total fertility rate (number of children per woman aged 15-49)	4.0	6.4	5.1	2011	Infant

No	*Indicators*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men and women combined*	*Year*	*Unit*
	Death statistics	*Urban*	*Rural*	*Urban and rural combined*	*Year*	*Unit*
23	Neonatal mortality (2006-2011)			31	2011	‰
24	Post-neonatal mortality (2006-2011)			31	2011	‰
25	Infant mortality (2006-2011)			62	2011	‰
26	Child mortality (2006-2011)			63	2011	‰
27	Combined child and infant mortality (2006-2011)			122	2011	‰
28	Life expectancy	58.9	63.6	61.2	2005	year
29	Fertility rate			4.33		
		Urban	*Rural*	*Urban and rural combined*	*Year*	*Unit*
30	Average household size			4.4	2007	Individual
31	Proportion of single-parent extended households headed by a woman	33.4	28.3	30.6	2010	%
32	Proportion of single-parent nuclear households headed by a woman	30.8	26.9	28.7	2010	%
33	Proportion of single-parent one-person households headed by a woman	19.5	23.5	21.7	2010	%
34	Proportion of population in rural areas					
35	Proportion of population in urban areas					

Source: General Census of the Population and Environment (RGPH) 2005, Cameroon Household Survey 3 (ECAM 3), EDS-MICS 4, Survey on Employment and the Informal Sector 2 (EESI 2).

Social, economic and cultural indicators

No	*Indicator*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men and women combined*	*Year*	*Unit*
36	Household consumption expenditure (annual)			1.44	2007	Million CFAF
37	Per capita income					
38	Share of expenditure on food			38.5	2007	%
39	Share of expenditure on housing			15.1	2007	%
40	Share of expenditure on health			3.9	2007	%
41	Share of expenditure on education			4.7	2007	%
42	Proportion of population below the national poverty line			39.9	2007	%
43	Proportion of population with adequate access to food					

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No.	Indicator	Men	Women	Men and women combined	Year	Unit
44	Gini coefficient (distribution of income)					
45	Gini coefficient (distribution of consumption expenditure)			0.390	2007	Unit
46	Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age	15.1	14.2	14.6	2011	%
47	Infant mortality rate					
48	Maternal mortality rate (maternal deaths per 100 000 live births)			669	2004	Per 100 000
49	Percentage of women of childbearing age using contraception or other forms of birth control (women aged 15-49)			23	2011	%
50	Terminations of pregnancy for medical reasons, as a proportion of live births					
51	Rate of HIV/AIDS infection	2.9	5.6	4.3	2011	%
	Rate of infection of communicable diseases					
52	Malaria					
53	Tuberculosis					
54	Cholera					
	Prevalence of major communicable and non-communicable diseases					
55	Cancer					
56	Diabetes					
57	Ten major causes of death					
A	Malaria					
B						
C						
D						
E						
F						
G						
H						
I						
J						
58	Net rate of enrolment in primary education	79.4	78.0	78.8	2010	%
59	Net rate of enrolment in secondary education	51.0	47.7	49.3	2010	%

No.	Indicator	Men	Women	Men and women combined	Year	Unit
60	Total attendance rate (primary, secondary and higher education)	85.7	76.1	80.9	2010	%
61	Attendance rate in secondary education					
62	Drop-out rate in primary education	2.1	2.3	2.2	2010	%
63	Drop-out rate in secondary education					
64	Teacher-student ratio in publicly funded schools					
65	Literacy rate	78.2	64.7	71.2	2010	%
66	Unemployment rate (ILO definition)	3.1	4.5	3.8	2010	%
	Employment distribution by sector					
67	Formal sector			9.5	2010	%
68	Informal sector			90.5	2010	%
69	Work participation rate	74.1	64.2	69.0	2010	%
70	Proportion of work force registered with trade unions			2.0	2010	%
	Per capita income					
71	Gross domestic product (GDP)			12 545.7	2011	109 CFAF
72	Annual growth rate			4.1	2011	%
73	Gross national income (GNI)			9 446.6	2006	109 CFAF
74	Consumer price index			2.9	2011	%
	Social expenditures as a proportion of total public expenditure and GDP:					
75	Food					
76	Housing					
77	Health					
78	Education					
79	Social protection					
80	External public debt (total, in billion CFAF)			1 302	2011	109 CFAF
81	Domestic public debt (total, in billion CFAF)			734	2011	109 CFAF
82	Proportion of international assistance provided in relation to the State budget by sector and in relation to GNI					

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Indicators on the political system

Indicators	*Men*	*Women*	*Men and women combined*	*Year*
Number of recognized political parties in Cameroon			271	2011
Proportion of population eligible to vote			46.83	
Proportion of non-citizen adult population registered to vote				
Number of complaints on the conduct of elections registered, by type of alleged irregularity				
Population coverage of the various media[18]				
Electronic			20	
Print			300	
Audiovisual			87	2012
Breakdown of media ownership by type				
Public				
Number of recognized NGOs			44	
Distribution of seats in the National Assembly by party				
Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM)			155	
Social Democratic Front (SDF)			16	
Union Nationale pour la démocratie et le progrès (UNDP) (National Union for Democracy and Progress)			6	
Union démocratique du Cameroun (UDC) (Democratic Union of Cameroon)			2	
Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC) (Union of the Peoples of Cameroon)			0	
Mouvement Progressiste (MP) (Progressive Movement)			1	
Number of deputies	155	25	180	
Percentage of women in parliament	86.1	13.9		
Proportions of national and subnational elections held within the schedule established by law				
Presidential				
Parliamentary				
Municipal				
Average voter turnouts in national and subnational elections by administrative unit				
Incidence of violent death and life-threatening crimes reported per 1,000 persons				
Number of persons who were arrested, brought before justice, convicted and incarcerated for violent or other serious crimes (such as homicide, armed robbery, assault and trafficking)				

[18] Since statistics relating to coverage are not available, the figures given under this rubric are the number of press bodies by type.

Indicators	*Men*	*Women*	*Men and women combined*	*Year*
Accused persons	13 891	353	14 244	2009
Convicted persons	9 391	131	9 522	2009
Proportion of persons (per 1,000 persons) who were arrested, brought before justice, convicted and incarcerated for violent or other serious crimes (such as homicide, armed robbery, assault and trafficking)				
Number of reported cases of sexually motivated violence (rape, female genital mutilation, honour crimes and acid attacks)				
Violence against a minor			24	2009
Offence against a minor		1 077	265	2009
Abduction			53	2009
Maximum period of pretrial detention				
Average period of pretrial detention				
Breakdown of prison population by length of sentence				
Life imprisonment	90	0	90	2006
10 to 20 years	603	17	620	
5 to 10 years	2 109	76	2 185	
1 to 5 years	7 671	328	7 999	
Under 1 year	8 513	490	9 003	
Breakdown of prison population by offence				
Serious offence				
Offence against the person	491	6	497	2006
Property offence	484	20	504	
Other	80	3	83	
Minor offence			0	
Offence against the person	976	60	1 036	
Property offence	1 266	39	1 305	
Other	525	24	549	
Infraction				
Offence against the person	4	2	6	
Property offence	2	0	2	
Other	96	0	96	
Infraction				
Offence against the person	4	2	6	
Property offence	2	0	2	
Other	96	0	96	
Incidence of death in custody				
Number of persons sentenced to death per year			0	2012
Average backlog of cases per judge at different levels of the judicial system				

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Indicators	*Men*	*Women*	*Men and women combined*	*Year*
Number of police and security personnel per 1,000 persons				
Number of prosecutors and judges per 1,000 persons			0.054 (1 judicial officer per 18 382 persons)	2011
Share of public expenditure on police/security and judiciary				
Of the accused and detained persons who apply for free legal aid, the proportion of those who receive it			78%	2011
Proportion of victims compensated after adjudication, by type of crime				